## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of performing image processing on an image synthesized from a natural image and a computer graphic (CG) image that has a single color, said method comprising:

utilizing at least one computer processor to perform the steps of:

_____receiving via a computer input device designation of a region containing a natural-image region in the synthesized image;

_____temporarily dividing the designated region into the natural-image region and a CG-image region by extracting from the designated region pixels that have the same color as the color contained in a region of the synthesized image, the region of the synthesized image being other than the designated region, ;

dividing said synthesized image into the natural-image region and the CG-image region, wherein

_____when a first small region composed of pixels having the same color as the color contained in the region other than the designated region is present in the natural-image region into which the designated region, has been temporarily divided, if the size of the first small region is greater than or equal to a first threshold value, the first small region is extracted from the designated region to be classified as part of the CG-image region, and

_____when a second small region composed of pixels having a color different from the color contained in the region other than the designated region is present in the CG-image region into which the designated region, has been temporarily divided, if the size of the second small region is greater than or equal to a second the threshold value, the second small region is not extracted from the temporary region and is to be classified as part of the natural-image region;

_____dividing said synthesized image into the natural-image region and the CG-image region;

_____computing an image-processing parameter for said image processing, based on said natural-image region;

_____acquiring an intermediate image by performing said image processing on said
synthesized image, based on said image-processing parameter; and

_____acquiring a processed image by synthesizing said natural-image region contained
in said intermediate image and said CG-image region contained in said synthesized image.


2. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein a boundary portion between said
natural-image region and CG-image region contained in said synthesized image is blurred and
then said CG-image region in said synthesized image and said natural-image region in said
intermediate image are synthesized.


3. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said synthesized image is
obtained by reading out synthesized image data from a storage medium.


4. (Canceled)


5. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said divided natural
image and CG image are displayed.


6. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein

a maximum rectangular region that is inscribed in said natural-image region is set; and

said image-processing parameter is computed based on an image within said maximum
rectangular region.


7. (Currently Amended) An ~~image processor~~ apparatus for performing image processing
on an image synthesized from a natural image and a computer graphic (CG) image that has a
single color, said ~~image processor~~ apparatus comprising:

a separation ~~means~~ unit for dividing said synthesized image into a natural-image region
and a CG-image region, wherein

designation is received of a region containing the natural-image region in the synthesized image,

the designated region is temporarily divided into the natural-image region and the CG-image region by extracting from the designated region pixels that have the same color as the color contained in a region of the synthesized image, ~~the region of the synthesized image being~~ other than the designated region, ~~and~~

~~said synthesized image is divided into the natural-image region and the CG-image region,~~ wherein

when a first small region composed of pixels having the same color as the color contained in the region other than the designated region is present in ~~the natural-image region into which~~ the designated region, ~~has been temporarily divided,~~ if the size of the first small region is greater than or equal to a ~~first~~ threshold value, the first small region is <u>extracted from the designated region to be</u> classified as part of the CG-image region, and

when a second small region composed of pixels having a color different from the color contained in the region other than the designated region is present in ~~the CG-image region into which~~ the designated region, ~~has been temporarily divided,~~ if the size of the second small region is greater than or equal to ~~a second~~ <u>the</u> threshold value, the second small region is <u>not extracted from the designated region and is to be</u> classified as part of the natural-image region, <u>and</u>

<u>said synthesized image is divided into the natural-image region and the CG-image region;</u>

a parameter computation ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> for computing an image-processing parameter for said image processing, based on said natural-image region;

a processing ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> for acquiring an intermediate image by performing said image processing on said synthesized image, based on said image-processing parameter; and

a synthesis ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> for acquiring a processed image by synthesizing said natural-image region contained in said intermediate image and said CG-image region contained in said synthesized image.

8. (Currently Amended) The image processor as set forth in claim 7, wherein said synthesis ~~means~~ unit blurs a boundary portion between said natural-image region and CG-image region contained in said synthesized image and then synthesizes said CG-image region in said synthesized image and said natural-image region in said intermediate image.

9. (Currently amended) The image processor as set forth in claim 7, further comprising a read-out ~~means~~ unit for obtaining said synthesized image by reading out synthesized image data from a storage medium.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) The image processor as set forth in claim 7, further comprising a display ~~means~~ screen for displaying said divided natural image and CG image.

12. (Currently Amended) The image processor as set forth in claim 7, wherein said parameter computation ~~means~~ unit sets a maximum rectangular region that is inscribed in said natural-image region, and computes said image-processing parameter, based on an image within said maximum rectangular region.

13. (Currently Amended) A system for performing image processing on an image synthesized from a natural image and a computer graphic (CG) image that has a single color, said system comprising:

a computer input device configured to receive designation of a region containing a natural-image region in the synthesized image; and

at least one computer processor programmed ~~device configured~~ to:

_____temporarily divide the designated region into the natural-image region and a CG-image region by extracting from the designated region pixels that have the same color as the color contained in a region of the synthesized image, ~~the region of the synthesized image being~~ other than the designated region.;

~~a device configured to divide said synthesized image into the natural-image region and a CG-image region,~~ wherein

_____when a first small region composed of pixels having the same color as the color contained in the region other than the designated region is present in ~~the natural-image region into which~~ the designated region, ~~has been temporarily divided,~~ if the size of the first small region is greater than or equal to a ~~first~~ threshold value, the first small region is <u>extracted from the designated region to be</u> classified as part of the CG-image region, and

_____when a second small region composed of pixels having a color different from the color contained in the region other than the designated region is present in ~~the CG-image region into which~~ the designated region, ~~has been temporarily divided,~~ if the size of the second small region is greater than or equal to ~~a second~~ <u>the</u> threshold value, the second small region is <u>not extracted from the designated region and is to be</u> classified as part of the natural-image region,~~;~~

_____<u>divide said synthesized image into the natural-image region and a CG-image region,</u>

_____~~a device configured to~~ compute an image-processing parameter for said image processing, based on said natural-image region,~~;~~

_____~~a device configured to~~ acquire an intermediate image by performing said image processing on said synthesized image, based on said image-processing parameter,~~;~~and

_____~~a device configured to~~ acquire a processed image by synthesizing said natural-image region contained in said intermediate image and said CG-image region contained in said synthesized image.

14. (Currently Amended) The system as set forth in claim 13, wherein said <u>at least one computer processor</u> ~~device configured to acquire the process image~~ employs a procedure of blurring a boundary portion between said natural-image region and CG-image region contained in said synthesized image and then synthesizing said CG-image region in said synthesized image and said natural-image region in said intermediate image.

15. (Previously Presented) The system as set forth in claim 13, further comprising a device configured to obtain said synthesized image by reading out synthesized image data from a storage medium.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) The system as set forth in claim 13, further comprising a device configured to display said divided natural image and CG image.

18. (Previously Presented) The system as set forth in claim 13, wherein said parameter computation procedure is a procedure of setting a maximum rectangular region that is inscribed in said natural-image region, and computing said image-processing parameter, based on an image within said maximum rectangular region.

19. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage device having recorded therein a program for causing a computer to execute a method of performing image processing on an image synthesized from a natural image and a computer graphic (CG) image that has a single color, said program comprising:

a procedure of receiving designation of a region containing a natural-image region in the synthesized image;

a procedure of temporarily dividing the designated region into the natural-image region and a CG-image region by extracting from the designated region pixels that have the same color as the color contained in a region of the synthesized image, the region of the synthesized image being other than the designated region, ;

a procedure of dividing said synthesized image into the natural-image region and the CG-image region, wherein

when a first small region composed of pixels having the same color as the color contained in the region other than the designated region is present in the natural-image region into which the designated region, has been temporarily divided, if the size of the first small

region is greater than or equal to a ~~first~~ threshold value, the first small region is <u>extracted from</u> <u>the designated region to be</u> classified as part of the CG-image region, and

when a second small region composed of pixels having a color different from the color contained in the region other than the designated region is present in ~~the CG-image region into which~~ the designated region, ~~has been temporarily divided,~~ if the size of the second small region is greater than or equal to ~~a second~~ <u>the</u> threshold value, the second small region is <u>not</u> <u>extracted from the designated region and is to be</u> classified as part of the natural-image region;

a procedure of dividing said synthesized image into the natural-image region and the CG-image region;

a procedure of computing an image-processing parameter for said image processing, based on said natural-image region;

a procedure of acquiring an intermediate image by performing said image processing on said synthesized image, based on said image-processing parameter; and

a procedure of acquiring a processed image by synthesizing said natural-image region contained in said intermediate image and said CG-image region contained in said synthesized image.

20. (Original) The computer readable recording medium as set forth in claim 19, wherein said synthesis procedure is a procedure of blurring a boundary portion between said natural-image region and CG-image region contained in said synthesized image and then synthesizing said CG-image region in said synthesized image and said natural-image region in said intermediate image.

21. (Original) The computer readable recording medium as set forth in claim 19, wherein the program further comprises a procedure of obtaining said synthesized image by reading out synthesized image data from a storage medium.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Previously Presented) The computer readable recording medium as set forth in claim 19, wherein the program further comprises a procedure of displaying said divided natural image and CG image.

24. (Original) The computer readable recording medium as set forth in claim 19, wherein said parameter computation procedure is a procedure of setting a maximum rectangular region that is inscribed in said natural-image region, and computing said image-processing parameter, based on an image within said maximum rectangular region.